

Fergus Hume is the Author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," "The Coin of Edward VII." and Other Great Detective Stories.

CHAPTER II.

And as he gazed at the road and tent, he tried to see any one who might be passing. He saw a woman, a gypsy, sit by the roadside, and taste the gypsy stew. Mother Cal is a rare hand at making 'um. Ain't she, Jericho?"

Jericho had disappeared, but as I finished my plate of stew, I saw a woman, a gypsy, sitting on a caravan with a young girl. She appeared to be about thirteen, with a face that was like a flower. She was a gypsy, and she was a true beautiful woman. Swarthy, black-eyed and even-haired, she was yet unlike a gypsy, and I had my doubts of her belonging to the tribe, even though she came from the same land as me. Mother Cal said, "That's a fine girl."

"I am called Starlight Nell, brother," she said frankly, when I asked her name, "and it is glad I am to see you in

the lid-whit letters on the floor name was still visible
Delighted by this discovery, I strove to raise the box.
It could not do so with ease, whereupon I guessed that
the lid was fastened within. It was locked, but I soon
overcame it. It opened with the aid of a steel instrument I had
brought with me. Then I received a shock, for although
the gold was there the gems were absent. Every ornament
had been unstruck and the jewels removed.
One moment a blazing light shone from the box, and
the next I felt a violent blow on the head and fell
senseless among the heather. Darkness followed and I knew
no more.

(To Be Continued)

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